

# Measuring the level of citizen participation in urban management based on urban good governance: A Case Study in District one in Tehran

**Tahmures Shiri<sup>1</sup>, Leila Sadat Salehi Rahbar<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. of Sociology, Assistant Professor in Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran; <sup>2</sup>M.A student in Urban Management, Department of Urban Management, E-Campus Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

## Abstract

The present study aimed to assess the level of participation among Citizens of the District one of Tehran. The study population includes all citizens of the district one of Tehran. The sample size was estimated 385 people, using a Cochran formula. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Validity of the questionnaire was confirmed using the respected professors and experts ideas and Cronbach's Alpha showed the reliability of the questionnaire as (83/0). To analyze the data, descriptive statistics (tables and graphs, statistics) and inferential statistics (Spearman correlation coefficient) in the form of SPSS software was used. The findings showed that there is a significant relationship between urban good governance with the participation of citizens. It was also found there is a significant relationship between transparency and accountability, satisfaction, social justice, citizen awareness and social trust with citizen participation. Finally, the results of descriptive statistics show that respondents evaluated participation rate in the relatively low and characteristics of urban good governance in average.

**Keywords:** urban good governance, citizen participation

## Introduction

Issues such as the growing urban population, urbanization of societies, globalization and the necessity of responding and citizen-oriented have led managers and decision-making to the benefit of good practices in the field of urban management; One of the techniques in the field is the good governance of the city (Meshgini et al., 2012). In particular, this theme has gained a special place in developing countries and in the establishment and institutionalization of civil society. The concept of governance is based on the cooperation of government and civil society. This concept is based on the fundamental principle that governments alone instead of taking over full responsibility for the management of society at all levels, it is better to be considered as one of the institutions responsible for managing agents of the community with citizens, the private sector and NGOs (Ghorbani, 2011). To pave the context of the realization of urban good governance or indeed the transition from government-oriented to citizen-oriented, society requires citizen awareness to create and establish the rule of law and citizen rights, accountability and transparency, efficiency and effectiveness, satisfaction, trust and social justice (Ghorbani, 2011).

One of the main components of urban good governance is partnership. Participation is the cornerstone of good governance. Public participation in urban affairs has examined and discussed from multiple viewpoints; Oakley and Marsden believe that social participation is voluntary participation of people in public programs (low participation); incite people's emotions and increase the understanding and ability of citizens and involvement in decision-making processes (average participation), run and share in the interests of the public ( high participation) (Shakeri, 2014).

Based on the definition of good governance, public participation seems necessary to solve the problems of the people. So that if people do not want or cannot take steps to help the

government of the city or their neighborhood, the probability that the city cannot manage to solve the critical issues is very much. On the other hand, if planners and city managers calling for the implementation and realization of their plans, they should coordinate with the social environment and do so is possible only with the participation of the people due to the deep knowledge of their needs, demands, and social environment (Alavitabar, 2000).

to improve conditions in urban neighborhoods, Municipalities and public institutions are trying to increase public participation by using a variety of methods and by these participation, they are laying the groundwork for achieving the desired objectives of communities. To achieve urban good governance, people's active participation is one of the basic principles (Adinehvand et al., 2012).

Therefore, this study seeks to measure the level of citizen participation in urban management based on urban good governance model in Tehran.

### **The foundation of Research theory**

#### ***Desired governance***

Urban governance is called desired when it has features. This governance must be effective, participatory, transparent, accountable and fair and apply legal regulations. In fact the process is driven by government but will have progress in partnership with the private sector and civil society. Participation and constructive engagement of all three sectors is essential for the achievement of human development (Sharifian Thani, 2001, p.50)

According to the UN definition of ecosystems, urban governance indicators include participation, equality, effectiveness, responsiveness and security (Yapng Ghrary, 2012). Direct executive responsibility for civil administration in this pattern has been less and more opportunities for bottom-up planning is provided by private and public institutions (Ziyari et al., 2013).

The most important international legal documents are in connection with the norms of desired urban governance (UDHR) (1948) (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) and the (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) (1966 AD), (Convention Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women) (1979) (Declaration of the right to development) (1986) (Convention rights of the child) (Nobari and Rahimi, 2000, p.22)

In this study, the dimensions of desired urban governance include transparency and accountability, efficiency and effectiveness (social satisfaction), social justice, citizen awareness and social trust (Ziyari et al., 2013).

#### ***Citizen participation***

For social development, UN Research Institute defines participation as organized efforts to increase control over resources and regulatory entities in certain social situations by some groups and movements that have been excluded from the scope of such controls and disadvantaged, (Ghaffari, 2001, p.35). Beiro defines participation as a share in what you find and take advantage of it or to participate in a group and cooperate with it (Niazi & Ghaffari, 2007, p.12)

Axelrod believes, so-called voluntary participation is used for certain groups, as distinct from public bodies and entry to them is based on individual choice, as distinct from shapes such as a family and also is limited to non-profit group participation, as distinguished from lucrative institutions (Niazi & Ghaffari, 2004, p.130).

It can be said that the participation process is based on acceptance of the principle of equality of people with the aim of consultation, cooperation and collaboration to improve the quantity and quality of life in all social, economic and political areas (Shakeri, 2014).

Theoretical framework of research is based on a combination of ideas, theories and viewpoints. Cooperative behavior is influenced by subjective and objective aspects, part of which is

also arisen from characteristic feature of the inner and outer part. These elements are shaped interact among members of society in social practices and conditioned by the structure of society. So, by affected, human in real situations must decide what action to do and how to behave (Shiani et al., 2012). The participation of both objective and subjective participation are used in this study to evaluate participation:

**Objective Participation:** The objective dimension and behavioral social participation which occurs as membership, monitoring, implementation and decision-making. To assess participation in the objective dimension, four indicators are used: the cost of economic and urban income, status monitoring and criticizing the performance of urban management, membership in associations and voluntary organizations, working status and participate in the planning of the city.

**Subjective Participation:** This dimension concerned with change in attitudes, beliefs and opinions of the people (Shiani et al., 2012) to measure the participation in the subjective dimension, the eleven items in both participation and attitude assessment includes 7 items and measuring tend to participation includes four items are used (Ziyari et al., 2012)

#### **Good governance and public participation**

Participation of women and men constitute the cornerstone of good governance and can be done directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions, such as NGOs. Participation must be deliberate and systematic (Hajiani, 2012). So, it can be said that participation and interaction between the three pillars of government, civil society and the private sector in carrying out programs and activities to achieve the goal of urban good governance is essential (Moayed, 2013). World experience shows that there has been increasing attention to the participatory approach from the 80's onward development programs as well as urban development. Until now, citizen participation is key to success the urban development projects and also one of the criteria for performance evaluation of urban management system (Ziyari et al., 2013).

#### **Review of Literature**

The following tables shows the studies done in Iran and other countries:

**Table 1: Research literature in Iran and abroad**

Results	title	Researcher	Year	Row
From the subjective dimension and the willingness of citizens to participate in urban management is high and an excellent platform for governance can be existed with their participation	Reviewing the status of citizen participation in urban good governance, with emphasis on municipal of Islamshahr	Shirazi et al.,	2015	1
From the subjective dimension, the desire of citizens to participate in municipal management is strong and there is a good platform for participation in the study areas. Also the objective of citizen participation are low and there is a significant correlation of 96 percent between the dependent variable standards of governance, citizen participation in urban management. There is also interaction between governance standards.	To investigate and evaluate urban management of Pars Abad according to citizens view	Musavi Mohamadrezaloo	2014	2
From the subjective dimension, the willingness of citizens to participate in urban management is high. But in objective of citizen participation follows the minimal level and between the	Measuring the level of citizen participation in urban management based on urban good	Ziyari et al.	2013	3

dependent variable standards of governance, citizen participation in urban management is significantly associated with 99% confidence. In addition, there is a close interaction between governance criteria.	governance - Case Study: Yasouj			
Participation of the average $x = -0.024$ And also the performance of the average $x = -0.025$ have been evaluated. These numbers indicate the Participation of performance of the municipality of Babolsar on the bottom level. But educated citizens with an average $x = 0.05$ compared to the other groups are of more interest to cooperate with municipalities.	Review of municipalities performance in terms of urban good governance (case study: Babolsar)	Adinehvand et al.	2011	4
The concentration of power in the provision of housing, the uncertainty factor not only in Nairobi but extended throughout the country. But supporters of a comprehensive urban governance systems in the production of housing believe that based on a system of cooperation, housing for the poor can be provided.	Urbanization, housing challenges and the lack of recognition in Nairobi: a case of failure of urban governance?	Vaniki	2015	5
Growing urbanization in the country, the structure of citizen participation are changing and experiences of citizen participation in urban governance has a positive impact on this pattern of governance.	Citizen participation in urban management attempts to transparency and accountability	Singh	2014	6
Great Britain urban land planning system, this paper argues that participatory planning models are adequately coordinated with social problems.	Citizen participation, problem of knowledge and use of urban land planning: an Austrian perspective	Pennington	2004	7

### Research Methodology

The purpose of the study and data collection of research is descriptive survey. The population consisted of the residents of Tehran. The sample size is 385 people using Cochran formula and random sampling was used for sampling. After collecting the questionnaires, 371 were selected. Ziyari et al., (2013) questionnaire was used for data collection. Whole five-item Likert (range: strongly agree to strongly disagree) was used to measuring. The Cronbach's alpha was .83, showing the reliability of the questionnaire . Validity of questionnaire was approved based on the opinions of experts and university professors.

### Research Hypothesis

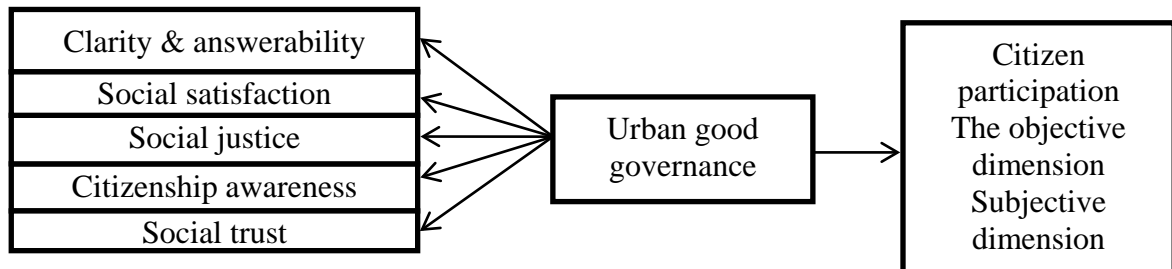
*The main hypothesis:* there is a significant relationship between urban good governance and citizen participation.

### Secondary hypotheses

- There is a significant relationship between transparency and accountability to citizen participation.
- There is a significant relationship between satisfaction and citizen participation.

- There is a significant relationship between social justice and citizen participation.
- There is a significant relationship between citizens' awareness and citizen participation.
- There is a significant relationship between social trust and citizen participation.

### Research models



**Figure 1: Conceptual model (Source: Ziarat et al, 2011)**

### Results

**Table 2: The results of demographic statistics**

Frequency percentage	Demographic variables	
28.%45	Female	Gender
72.%54	Male	
63.%29	20-30year	Age
14.%53	31-40year	
32.%17	41years and more	
8.%4	Diploma and lower	Educational level
38.%20	Associate Degree	
4.%41	Bachelor	
42.%33	Master's degree or higher	
6.%30	More than 15 years	

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics of Variable of citizen participation**

Standard deviation	Mean	Max	Min.	Variable
122.	8.3	1	371	The objective dimension
2.28	4	5.1	371	The subjective dimension
3.2	3.4	1	371	citizen participation

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics of urban good governance Variable**

Standard deviation	Mean	Max.	Min.	Variable
.133	83.4	33.1	371	Transparency and accountability
.393	5	14.2	371	Satisfaction
83.2	2.4	2.1	371	social justice
2.3	67.3	83.1	371	Awareness of citizens
1.3	334.	.331	371	social trust
1.3	5	1	371	Urban good governance

### Normality test

Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was conducted for data normalization.

**Table 5: K-S test results**

Results	Sig.	Statistics of K-S	Number	Variable
normal	055.0	65.0	371	The objective dimension
normal	.3860	.670	371	The subjective dimension
Not normal	011.0	56.0	371	Transparency and accountability
normal	234.0	540.	371	Satisfaction
normal	119.0	66.0	371	social justice
Not normal	.0420	82.0	371	Awareness of citizens
normal	33.0	.710	371	social trust

### Research Hypothesis Testing

**Table 6: Correlation of urban good governance citizen participation**

Result	Significant relationship	Error Value	Sig.	Spearman correlation coefficients	Variable names
Confirmed	exist	05.0	002.0	79.0	urban good governance - participation of citizens
Confirmed	exist	05.0	000.0	530.	Transparency and accountability - participation of citizens
Confirmed	exist	05.0	009.0	572.0	Satisfaction - participation of citizens
Confirmed	exist	.050	.0000	72.0	Social justice - participation of citizens
Confirmed	exist	05.0	012.0	0.48	Awareness of citizens - participation of citizens
Confirmed	exist	05.0	.0030	710.	Social trust - participation of citizens

As Table 6 shows:

- By confidence level of 95%, according to the significance level (0.002) which is smaller than the error, there is a significant relationship between urban good governance and citizen participation.

- By confidence level of 95%, according to the significance level (0.000) which is smaller than the error, there is a significant relationship between Transparency and accountability and citizen participation.

- By confidence level of 95%, according to the significance level (0.009) which is smaller than the error, there is a significant relationship between Satisfaction and citizen participation.

- By confidence level of 95%, according to the significance level (0.000) which is smaller than the error, there is a significant relationship between social justice and citizen participation.

- By confidence level of 95%, according to the significance level (0.012) which is smaller than the error, there is a significant relationship between Awareness of citizens and citizen participation.

- By confidence level of 95%, according to the significance level (0.003) which is smaller than the error, there is a significant relationship between social trust and citizen participation.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The results show the most frequency is related to men with 72.54 percent and women with a frequency of 28.45% fall in second. The most frequency is related to the age group of 40-31 year (14.53%).after that is the age group 30-20 years (63.29%) and least frequency is also related to 41 years and older (32.17%). Also, the most frequency is of BA (4.41%). The next batch is master's



degree or higher (42.33%) and the lowest-ranked are employees with high school diploma and lower (8.4%).

Mean score variable of citizen participation is 3.2. Due to the lower mean value of the average value (3) (because of use of whole five-item Likert), it can be concluded that the respondents have evaluated this variable weak. The mean variable of urban good governance is 1.3 which shows that respondents have evaluated this variable medium.

According to the results presented in Table 7, since the correlation between the pattern of urban good governance and citizen participation have been reported positive, the relationship between the two variables is direct. Similarly, the relationship between transparency and accountability, Satisfaction, social justice, social awareness and trust of citizens with participation of citizens is direct. These results is located in one direction to the study results of Shirazi et al (2015), Mousavi (2014) and Ziary et al (2013).

In line with first secondary hypothesis, it is suggested that to inform the citizens about urban issues, they would be consulted about the urban plans and programs, be clear about the procedures and responsibilities of the municipality for citizens.

In line with second secondary hypothesis, the municipal authorities measure satisfaction of citizens with municipal services periodically and by using standard patterns, they attempted to identify citizens' satisfaction indicators and do practical actions to get consent more citizens by planning and setting priorities.

In line with the third secondary hypothesis, by carrying out the municipal projects, they attempt to do need assessment and review priority of needed services in metropolitan areas and provide urban designs equally for all urban areas.

In line with fourth secondary hypothesis, municipal officials inform the people about the rights of citizens and also duties of the municipality. In this regard, the provision of training programs and the use of media tools can be useful.

In line with the fifth secondary hypothesis, municipal officials attempted to organize programs to get feedback from people using various electronic systems such as e-mail and then address them to gain the trust of the people. In addition, by periodic report and describe the taken and in progress measures, it can be pointed out the good faith and sincerity of authorities to the people and thereby the trust of citizens can be attracted.

Also, since dimensions and components of Ziari et al (2012) model was used in this study to describe the urban good governance and citizen participation in the district one of Tehran, it is suggested to assess the relationship between these concepts in future research by using other models which examine other aspects of research variables. Also, conducting the research in other regions and cities and doing comparative studies are also useful.

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